

The Bluffton College Bulletin

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BLUFFTON COLLEGE

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(FROM THE MENNONITE)

Bluffton College is governed by a Board of Trustees composed of seventeen men who hold and use the property of the corporation for the cause of Christian education among Mennonites. The President of the College is ex-officio member of the Board and the Alumni Association elects one member. The remainder of the Board is composed of Mennonites, three being selected from each of five branches of the denomination, viz., Old Mennonites, General Conference Mennonites, Mennonite Brethren, Defenseless Mennonites and Illinois Conference. Conferences may elect these members, but in case they fail to do so the Board fills its own vacancies. Thus far conferences of three of the branches have recognized the institution, while individuals from all the branches are found in the board and faculty and among the students and donors of funds.

The Institution is organized as three co-ordinate schools—College of Liberal Arts, Mennonite Seminary and Conservatory of Music. The College of Liberal Arts aims to serve the needs especially of those of the above named conferences who are in no way associated with any other college, viz. Eastern and Middle District Conferences of the General Conference, the Mennonite Brethren, Illinois and Defenseless Conferences. These numbering about 17,000 members can easily furnish funds and students for a standard college suited to their needs. The College is also open to all persons interested in this kind of institution and is filling a real need in northwestern Ohio, which, up to this time, has had no recognized standard college.

The College of Liberal Arts introduces the student to all the

great fields of knowledge and thus puts him into full possession of all his powers and enables him to take his place in the world as an intelligent, happy, useful member of society. This training naturally cultivates a breadth of mind and tolerance of spirit which is desirable, but should be accompanied by a nobility of character and positiveness of conviction which is cultivated only by religious teaching and influence. This essential phase of a true education is given throughout the required Bible courses, the daily chapel exercises, the Sunday Vesper services, the various lines of religious activities conducted by the students' Christian associations and the wholesome Christian atmosphere that pervades the whole life of the College.

The literary, athletic, social and musical activities all have a part in giving these young people a normal, wholesome, busy life in which they use their superabundance of energy in a fruitful way and develop strong, pure, happy lives with high standards, wholesome influences, and busy life. The whole problem of student discipline is a simple one. In fact it is largely taken care of by a Students' Senate and self-governing organizations in the dormitories.

The faculty is composed of twelve Christian men and women, thoroughly trained in the best colleges and universities of America and Europe, with wide experience in Educational work. Every effort is made to do work of the highest grade and the universities are recognizing this by giving full credit to the courses given.

In addition to the courses regularly given in colleges we are giving emphasis to three lines of practical training for important vocation, viz., teaching, farming and housekeeping. Courses in Education, Agriculture and Household Economics, similar to those given in state universities, can be taken as a part of the regular courses for the A. B. degree, thus combining liberal and vocational training in a way that we believe will meet the needs of a large number of our constituency, who prefer a liberal, vocational education in a Christian College to a highly specialized, technical training in a state university.

The general demand among the various branches of Mennonites for a strong THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY and Bible Institute was the real cause for the union organization that governs Bluffton College and Mennonite Seminary. The Seminary aims to meet the real needs for the training of all classes of Christian workers for all branches of Mennonites. No one branch would be able to do this work, but by uniting the interests and efforts of 70,000 Mennonites of America, a great work can be accomplished for the denomination. The Seminary will be built upon

the orthodox, Evangelical, Mennonite principles, based on the inspired Bible in which there is practical agreement among all the branches. The few doctrines in which the Conferences differ can easily be taught by each branch through other means and agencies so that there need be no loss or compromise because of co-operation.

In many respects this is a critical time for Mennonitism in America. Doctrines, principles, beliefs, customs and traditions have come down to us from our forefathers; they have been passed from one generation to the next with much explanation of or questioning, taking on various modifications and fixing special forms. In recent years, because of the work of our schools and colleges, Sunday Schools, Young People's societies, church publications, etc., practically our whole membership has become intelligent, open-minded, and they will not accept any teaching without being convinced that here is not mere tradition but genuine Scriptural truth applied to the conditions and needs of our time. Here is real work for a seminary faculty to perform. Find the real Scriptural truth in our Mennonite doctrines and forms and teach them so as to give conviction and command the loyalty of our most intelligent people.

Another phase of the pending crisis arises out of the fact that in the past our churches were served by untrained ministers who gave most of their time to making a living at some other occupation. But with more intelligent congregations, more aggressive work and the many distracting and opposing interests of our time we need the best workers available who will give all their time and their best talents to lead in this great work. At the same time our people will not give sufficient support for all these workers. This transition must be made by those who will give their best service at great sacrifices. Can we find them? Other church schools will gladly train them but will they come back to us with real conviction for our principles, real loyalty for the church and a willingness to sacrifice for the cause. Past experience has shown us that they will not in large enough numbers. This is another great work that the Seminary should do for the church.

The work of the Seminary is outlined in two courses. The first, for those who have had college training, consists of three years and includes a thorough study of the Bible in the original languages, courses in history and doctrines of the church and training for the work of ministers, missionaries and Sunday school workers. This course leads to the B. D. degree. The two courses for the A. B. and B. D. degrees can be completed by a good student in six years. Or a college graduate can do one year's



work in the Seminary for the A. degree.

The ENGLISH SEMINARY course is more of the nature of the Bible Institute work and is offered for those of less training who want a thorough course in the English Bible and practical training for various kinds of Christian work. In Lima, Bluffton and surrounding community there will be opportunity for experience in all kinds of city mission, city, village and rural church and Sunday school work so that theory and practice can be properly co-ordinated.

The Seminary course was started with good sized classes this year and next year with Dean Langenwalter in charge, assisted by five other instructors we expect to see the Seminary fully organized and in good working order.

The CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC aims to serve the entire denomination and the local territory by giving a thorough musical education in all branches of this great art in a standard course leading to Mus. B. degree. We need better musicians and a better appreciation of good music in our churches, schools, homes and concert halls. Music lifts our soul in worship, and adds much to the richness and beauty of life. The best way to overcome the interest in that which is low and vulgar is to cultivate a real interest in the higher things, and the Americans must be taught to use their leisure to better advantage.

The faculty consists of six well trained, experienced specialists in the various branches of music. The musical organizations include a large choral society, a Vesper choir, an orchestra, and a quartet. Every two weeks a recital is given by students or faculty, while the artists' recitals have brought to Bluffton some of the leading artists in America. Thus, by studying, singing, playing and hearing the student is able to cultivate his talents so as to enjoy the best music and serve his fellowmen in a useful manner.

While taking the regular music courses the students can elect work in the College or Seminary and have all the advantages of the varied activities and good influences of a Christian institution.

Bluffton College and Mennonite Seminary have undertaken a great cause and a large work. Some of the leading educators of the church are uniting their best efforts to making this a strong force in uniting and strengthening the church, and the Board has assumed heavy obligations and made large plans. A few large and many small donations have made the beginnings possible, and a growing body of loyal and enthusiastic students is helping to lay the new basis for a great future. Will the church as a whole see the opportunity and make this one of the strongest Christian institutions of America, for our young people, our beloved church and the glory of God?